

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

Sub A1

1. A method for sharing knowledge comprising the steps of:
 2. (a) receiving information input into a database;
 3. (b) organizing items of information in the database;
 4. - (c) collecting ratings and comments associated with each item of information;
 5. and
 6. (d) allowing users to access and sort items of information according to selected rating-criteria in order to find the most reliable and/or valuable information from the database.
1. 2. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (e) adding content, multi-criteria ratings and comment data to the database.
1. 3. The method of claim 2 which includes the step of (f) calculating and displaying rating scores for each item of information.
1. 4. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (g) allowing users to locate and access selected content in a graphic display format.

The method of claim 1 wherein the organizing step (b) further comprises the step of:

(b1) constraining the input according to subject and topic classifications choices made by user prior to contributing content.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides graphic symbols for representing the aggregate rating scores for each criteria and for representing the level of comment support for the content submission.

7. The method of claim 6 where a color of the subject descriptions corresponding to information items provides visual indicators of overall rating scores of an information item.

8. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a side-by-side display of comments supporting or disputing the content submission allowing individuals to make informed decisions and choices of what to believe or what methods to use to accomplish a particular goal.

9. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a display of other comments providing additional information, links or opinions on the content submission.

10. The method of claim 2 which includes the step of (h) tracking and controlling the rating process, to prevent a user from voting more than once on a particular item.

11. The method of claim 6 which includes the step of (i) displaying the result of an aggregate group rating.

1 12. The method of claim 11 which includes the step of (j) displaying the level of support
2 for an item of information as calculated from the ratio of positive to negative comments
3 submitted for an item.

1 13. The method of claim 12 which includes the step of (k) allowing users to sort within a
2 topic according to personally selected rating criteria, thereby causing the most useful content
3 to rise to the top of the sorted list.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the rating criteria comprises weighted combinations
2 of rating criteria.

1 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the user is asked to select personal preferences
2 indicating the importance of each rating criteria to them.

1 16. The method of claim 15 which includes the step of (l) allowing users to rate
2 contributors.

1 17. The method of claim 15 which includes the step of (l) allowing users to communicate
2 with contributors by automatic communication links.

1 18. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (m) allowing users to search on a
2 given subject or within an information item by entering key words.

19. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (n) allowing users to add new subject or topic divisions to the knowledge base.

20. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a knowledge base map that is automatically generated as topics and sub-topics are added to the knowledge base.

21. The method of claim 1 in which ratings associated with individual contributors are tracked, allowing content submissions to be sorted by source or contributor ranking.

22. The method of claim 1 in which content submissions are displayed under a topic in order of submission date, allowing new submissions to be exposed to the group for initial ratings and comment feedback.

23. An interface for providing information concerning a subject comprising:

- a first area that shows the subject and contributor name;
- a second area that shows the content of the information item;
- a third area that shows ratings related to the subject; and
- a fourth area that allows users to submit ratings for the information item.

24. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides graphic symbols for representing the aggregate rating scores for each criteria and for representing the level of comment support for the content submission.

1 25. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a navigation
2 area indicating where the posting is located within the data base structure.

1 26. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides access to the
2 text of comments regarding the information item as submitted by other users.

1 27. - The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a side-by-side
2 display of comments supporting or disputing the content submission allowing individuals to
3 make informed decisions and choices of what to believe or what methods to use to
4 accomplish a particular goal.

1 28. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a display of
2 other comments providing additional information, links or opinions on the content
3 submission.